

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A character recognition method for accurately constructing a result string the method comprising the steps of:

generating a digital representation of an input string including characters;

generating a result set for each character in the input string, each result set including a plurality of candidate characters and a plurality of associated confidence indications indicative of successful recognition of the corresponding candidate character;

creating a candidate string by concatenating a candidate character with a most favorable corresponding confidence indication from each result set;

selecting a plurality of character types;

for each selected character type, creating a candidate string by concatenating a candidate character with a most favorable corresponding confidence indication of the selected character type from each result set;

reviewing each candidate string to determine if all candidate characters of a candidate string conform to the same character type;

removing from further consideration any candidate string that includes candidate characters conforming to different character types;

for each created and remaining candidate string, combining the associated confidence indication for each concatenated candidate character to form a corresponding combined confidence indication; and

selecting as the result string the created candidate string with a most favorable corresponding combined confidence indication and having all candidate characters conforming to a selected character type.

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2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:  
each confidence indication is numeric; and  
the most favorable corresponding combined confidence indication has a greatest  
combined value.

3. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the combined numeric value is a  
weighted average.

4. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of: if there is no  
candidate character in a result set for a character type, extracting a substitute candidate  
character of a different character type and ascribing a substitute associated confidence  
indication for the substitute candidate character.

5. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the selected character  
types includes a plurality of subset character types.

6. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein the at least one of the selected character  
types further includes a pattern for positioning the candidate characters of the plurality of  
subset character types in the corresponding created candidate string.

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7. (new) A computer readable medium having computer instruction code for performing a method of character recognition to accurately construct a result string, the method comprising:

generating a digital representation of an input string including characters;

generating a result set for each character in the input string, each result set including a plurality of candidate characters and a plurality of associated confidence indications indicative of successful recognition of the corresponding candidate character;

creating a candidate string by concatenating a candidate character with a most favorable corresponding confidence indication from each result set;

selecting a plurality of character types;

for each selected character type, creating a candidate string by concatenating a candidate character with a most favorable corresponding confidence indication of the selected character type from each result set;

reviewing each candidate string to determine if all candidate characters of a candidate string conform to the same character type;

removing from further consideration any candidate string that includes candidate characters conforming to different character types;

for each created and remaining candidate string, combining the associated confidence indication for each concatenated candidate character to form a corresponding combined confidence indication; and

selecting as the result string the created candidate string with a most favorable corresponding combined confidence indication and having all candidate characters conforming to a selected character type.

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8. (new) The computer readable medium of claim 7, wherein:  
each confidence indication is numeric; and  
the most favorable corresponding combined confidence indication has a greatest  
combined value.

9. (new) The computer readable medium of claim 8, wherein the combined numeric  
value is a weighted average.

10. (new) The computer readable medium of claim 7, wherein the method further  
comprises:  
if there is no candidate character in a result set for a character type, extracting a  
substitute candidate character of a different character type and ascribing a substitute  
associated confidence indication for the substitute candidate character.

11. (new) The computer readable medium of claim 7, wherein at least one of the  
selected character types includes a plurality of subset character types.

12. (new) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the at least one of  
the selected character types further includes a pattern for positioning the candidate characters  
of the plurality of subset character types in the corresponding created candidate string.

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13. (new) A character recognition method for accurately constructing a result string, the method comprising the steps of:

generating a digital representation of an input string including characters;

generating a result set for each character in the input string, each result set including a plurality of candidate characters and a plurality of associated confidence indications;

creating a candidate string by concatenating a candidate character with a most favorable corresponding confidence indication from each result set;

selecting a plurality of character types;

for each selected character type, creating a candidate string by concatenating a candidate character of the selected character type from each result set;

reviewing each candidate string to determine if all candidate characters of a candidate string conform to the same character type;

removing from further consideration any candidate string that includes candidate characters conforming to different character types;

for each created and remaining candidate string, combining the associated confidence indication for each concatenated candidate character to form a corresponding combined confidence indication; and

selecting as the result string the created candidate string with a most favorable corresponding combined confidence indication and having all candidate characters conforming to a selected character type.

14. (new) The method of claim 13, wherein:

each confidence indication is numeric; and

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the most favorable corresponding combined confidence indication has a greatest combined value.

15. (new) The method of claim 14, wherein the combined numeric value is a weighted average.

16. (new) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of: if there is no candidate character in a result set for a character type, extracting a substitute candidate character of a different character type and ascribing a substitute associated confidence indication for the substitute candidate character.

17. (new) The method of claim 13, wherein at least one of the selected character types includes a plurality of subset character types.

18. (new) The method of claim 17, wherein the at least one of the selected character types further includes a pattern for positioning the candidate characters of the plurality of subset character types in the corresponding created candidate string.

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